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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [PREF](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [US](#) [AU](#) [UN](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: SUDANESE VP TAHA SAYS NO DECISION YET ON UN
TRANSITION

Classified By: CDA Cameron Hume, Reason: Sction 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: On May 13, Sudanese VP Taha told CDA Hume that Sudan had not yet decided on whether to accept transition to a UN peacekeeping force in Darfur. The Government of Sudan is committed to the Darfur Peace Agreement, and it is ready to take concrete steps, such as expanding delivery of humanitarian assistance, to widen support for the agreement. Sudan is willing, however, to accept NATO support for the AU peacekeeping force in Darfur. President Bashir appreciated the recent letter from President Bush, and has just sent a reply. End Summary.

DPA: Turning the Page in Darfur & in U.S.-Sudan Relations

¶2. (2) CDA Hume at his request met with Sudanese VP Taha May 13 to discuss implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement. Hume said that the agreement was a positive opportunity to turn the page in the Darfur tragedy, and potentially an opportunity also to turn the page in U.S./Sudanese relations. U.S. officials were continuing to work with AU mediator Salim in hopes of producing a breakthrough that would enable Fur leader Abdel Wahid to sign the agreement. For the outcome of the peace to be positive, all those concerned will have to step up to their responsibilities, at times making difficult decisions. The agreement itself was not self-implementing, and the situation in Darfur had many tragic aspects.

¶3. (C) Hume recalled that President Bush had recently announced the rerouting of ships carrying USG food donations, a decision that will enable WFP soon to announce increases in the daily food rations for IDPs in Darfur. The Government of Sudan should consider deciding on its own contribution through WFP so that the rations could be further increased. The announcement of WFP of a cut in rations at the same time as the peace was signed had a bad impact; IDPs in Kalma and Abu Shouk camps outside Nyala and El Fasher were now rioting.

CDA Hume: NGO Work Hampered; NATO Can Strengthen AMIS

¶4. (C) Hume raised the problems confronted in Sudan by international humanitarian agencies. The visa and residency permit requirements were onerous and expensive; often the government seemed intent on hampering their operations. If the Government of Sudan hoped that the Darfur peace could lead to improved bilateral relations, it would have to improve treatment of international NGOs. Peace plus difficulties for humanitarian assistance was a negative message.

¶5. (C) Regarding the military aspects of the peace, Hume

recalled that U.S. policy was based on securing a peace agreement in Abuja, achieving a transition to UN peacekeeping, and strengthening AU peacekeeping in the interim. As he had mentioned to Taha three weeks ago, the USG thought that up to 500 NATO personnel could help AMIS in the areas of training, logistics, and intelligence; some of the troops would be American, but most would come from other countries. At the same time, the U.S. thought it essential to get an early decision to authorize preparation of the transition to a UN mission. The USG was already planning to send three officers to help AMIS with verification issues, and an early visit by RADM Hunt was being considered.

VP Taha: Sudan Grateful to USG for Food, Will Also Give

16. (C) Taha said that on May 14 the Sudanese ministers of humanitarian assistance and of finance were scheduled to decide on a Sudanese contribution to help with the food situation in Darfur. Sudan was grateful for President Bush's decision on food aid. The goal should be a return to full rations. He acknowledged that relations with INGOs had at times been difficult, caused on the one side by nationalist resentments, and on the other by caustic criticism of the Sudanese government. It was important to fix relations, and the Sudanese government thought that the peace agreement presented the right basis for doing so. Taha had discussed this issue with UN U/SYG Egelund earlier in the week.

VP Taha: Gov't Committed to Broad Support for DPA...

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17. (C) Taha said that the Sudanese government was reaching out to all groups in Darfur, both those who felt excluded from the Abuja talks and to Abdel Wahid. The government was committed to the agreement and wanted to secure the fullest possible support for it. Hume said that the USG shared the view that the basis of support had to be widened, and it was considering steps that might help secure that support.

Although No Decision Made Yet re Transition to UN Mission

18. (C) On military questions, Taha said that Sudan would welcome the arrival of U.S. military experts to advise AMIS on verification issues, as it would a visit by RADM Hunt. Sudan wanted to see how AMIS could be strengthened in the near future, including with the addition of troops from countries such as Algeria and Egypt, and it accepted that NATO could play a role in strengthening AMIS. As for transition to a UN force, no/no decision had been made. At times the UN approach in Khartoum was overly confrontational, and there was the threat of International Criminal Court activity. Taha commented that it would not help to rush this issue.

CDA Hume: Sudan Should Invite UN Assessment Mission

19. (C) CDA Hume noted that the UN Security Council was now considering a draft resolution on this subject. However that was dealt with, Security Council members have planned a visit to Sudan at the start of June -- it would be simply impossible to keep this issue quiet for long. The best course of action for Sudan would be to state now that it wanted the international community, including the United Nations, to support implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement, and to invite the Secretary General to send an assessment mission. He suggested that the Government of

Sudan discuss the issue with UN U/SYG Guehenno, who was in charge of peace-keeping and who had just done a good press interview on the subject of the Darfur peace agreement.

¶10. (C) Taha said that he would talk with President Bashir about establishing direct contact with Guehenno. He said that Sudan appreciated the personal involvement of President Bush in managing U.S./Sudanese relations. President Bashir was glad to receive the recent letter from President Bush, and a reply from President Bashir was on the way to Washington.

Comment

¶11. (C) Taha,s comments on NATO assistance for AMIS and on transition to UN peacekeeping are not necessarily the last word. It behooves the USG to secure a specific request from the AU to NATO for assistance. As for the UN, the best course is to maintain pressure on Khartoum, but to keep it focused, for now, on the practical necessity of shifting the burden of implementing the Darfur peace from the African Union to the United Nations. End Comment.
HUME